

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY ARA/AND:FJDEVINE:RDRISCOLL
APPROVED BY ARA - MR. SHLAUDEMANN
S/S - RGAMBLE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

S E C R E T STATE 004406

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SHLAUDEMANN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR MILI EC PE BL CI

SUBJECT: VISIT OF BRIG. GEN. ENRIQUE MOREL

REF: SANTIAGO 12222

1. BRIG GEN MOREL SPENT THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON AND AS YOU PREDICTED HAS CONTACTED STATE, DOD AND CIA.
2. IN TALKS WITH DEPT OFFICERS HE PRESENTED GRIM PICTURE OF PERU POISED FOR MASSIVE ATTACK AGAINST NORTHERN CHILE ON JANUARY 20 OR 27. WE TOLD HIM FORTHRIGHTLY WE HAD NO INFO TO CONFIRM SUCH EXPECTATIONS AND WE POINTED OUT CERTAIN FALSE ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING HIS PRESENTATION. MOREL ACCEPTED THIS WITH SURPRISINGLY GOOD GRACE, LEAVING CLEAR IMPRESSION HE HAD BEEN TESTING US AND OUR REACTION AND WAS RELIEVED OR EVEN PLEASED WITH WHAT HE ELICITED.

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3. WE POINTED OUT TO MOREL AN APPARENT CONFUSION ON PART OF SOME CHILEANS AS TO MESSAGE WE HAD SOUGHT TO CONVEY VIA CHILEAN EMBASSY (STATE 313214). HE THEN PRODUCED COPY OF AMENABAR'S TELEGRAPHIC REPORT TO SANTIAGO WHICH CLEARLY AND FAITHFULLY REPORTED TENOR OF OUR DECEMBER 29

CONVERSATION WITH HIM. NEITHER MOREL, NOR AMENABAR,

NOR WE CAN EXPLAIN 180 DEGREE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OUR MESSAGE ACCURATELY RELAYED BY AMENABAR AND VERSION THEREOF REPORTED TO EMBASSY AND USDAO BY CHILEAN MILITARY IN SANTIAGO.

4. TAKING ADVANTAGE OF HIS PRESENCE, WE THEN SOUGHT TO IMPRESS UPON MOREL REALITIES OF WASHINGTON SCENE, SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IS VIEWED HERE, IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING PROGRESS BY GOC ON THAT ISSUE, AND HIGH LEVEL OF ATTENTION AFFORDED THIS BY US PRESS, CONGRESS AND OTHERS. WE TOOK THE OCCASION TO STRESS DESIRABILITY OF PERMITTING ACCESS TO QUALIFIED GROUPS OF INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS WHOSE FINDINGS AND OFFICIAL REPORTS COULD CARRY SIGNIFICANT WEIGHT.

5. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT MOREL VISIT WAS USEFUL AND THAT HE MAY THIS WEEKEND CARRY BACK TO SANTIAGO SOME SALUTARY IMPACT FROM OBSERVERS HERE. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANY PLAYBACK YOU CAN PROVIDE.

6. COMMENT: WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT MOREL'S MISSION IS MORE TO IMPRESS US WITH THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PERUVIAN THREAT THAN TO CONFIRM OR DENY ANY IMMINENT ATTACK. HE VERY CAREFULLY WENT THROUGH THE STANDARD ROUTINE ABOUT HOW SOVIET AND CUBAN INFLUENCE IN PERU WAS A THREAT TO THE U.S. FURTHER CONFIRMATION OF OUR SUSPICIONS CAME WHEN WE ASKED HIM WHICH WAS THE BEST SEASON FOR A CAMPAIGN. HE REPLIED THAT JANUARY
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AND FEBRUARY ARE BAD MONTHS FOR AN ATTACK BECAUSE OF THE BOLIVIAN WINTER WHICH OFTEN CAUSES THE RIVER BEDS IN NORTHERN CHILE TO FLOOD. IN HIS PROFESSIONAL OPINION THE BEST MONTHS WOULD BE OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER.

HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT AN ATTACK IS IMMINENT. HOWEVER, HE DOES BELIEVE THAT WAR WITH PERU IS INEVITABLE AT SOME POINT.
KISSINGER

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NNN

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